



The Compassionate Friends

Southwest Suburbs/Cleveland Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

We Need Not Walk Alone, We Are The Compassionate Friends

P.O. Box 3696 Oak Brook, IL 60522 1-877-969-0010

National Website: www.compassionatefriends.org

Chapter Website: www.tcf-cle.net



Chapter Closed Facebook Group

June, 2017

WHAT IS COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS?

Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents.

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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our

MISSION STATEMENT: When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow. We Need Not Walk Alone. We Are The Compassionate Friends.

June Monthly Meeting

June 8th at 7:00pm: The discussion theme will be "How men and women grieve differently" As always you can raise any concerns or issues you feel the group might be able to help with. Doreen and Brian Sismour will facilitate.

MEETING LOCATION: *Bethany Lutheran Church, 6041 Ridge Road, Parma 44129*

Remembering Our Children

Please take a moment to remember these children and those who love them on their birth dates and anniversaries. Although they were only here for a short time, the impact they made on their loved ones remains forever.



June Birth Dates

2 - Michael Benjamin Kurtz	13 - Christina Elswick
2 - Reid Alan McClellan	16 - John Lazor
2 - Stephen Charles Parish, Jr.	18 - Katherine Lynn Nemes
2 - Robert Clayton Samels	18 - Hunter Lane Poore
8 - Arrie Clifton Pritchard, Jr.	18 - Jody Lynn Poore
10 - Sean Daniel Byers	19 - Joseph Kather
12 - Monica Judith Ann Adams/Bittner	29 - Rebecca Helen Truelsch
12 - Neil Thomas Guercia	30 - Angel "AJ" Cuevas, Jr.
12 - Tyler Andrew Moore	30 - Andrew C. King

June Anniversary Dates

David George Benning (Age 46)	Brian David Moll (Age 21)
Christopher Anthony Bonsell (Age 36)	Courtney Julianne Nichols (Age 13)
Susan Elaine Chorich (Age 19)	Stephen John Parker (Age 22)
Francis Scott Cwiklinski (Age 34)	Scott Lee Pearson (Age 30)
Joan Marie Dolinsky (Age 41)	Gregg Benton Rael (Age 24)
Daniel Feuerstein (Age 23)	Randy Stock (Age 25)
Robert C. Higgins (Age 54)	Christopher Michael Vinson (Age 26)
Thomas (Tommy) Joseph Kess, Jr. (Age 25)	David William Woods (Age 26)
Scott Mickol (Age 16)	

Remembering Our Children



The May meeting was the first for this bereaved mother. It is very difficult to attend a first meeting and we applaud her for having the courage to come. We hope we were of help, and that she will return and work through her grief journey with us.

First Meeting

Jeanette Kaulfersch, remembering her beloved son Matthew Josef-Arthur (Age 23)

Love Gifts

Love gifts are donations that are made to our chapter to support the continuation of the chapter as well as the newsletter. We would like to thank these people who donated to our Chapter in memory of their loved one(s).

~ Betty Benning ~ In loving memory of David George Benning (Age 46)

~ Kathryn Kurtz ~ In loving memory of Michael Benjamin Kurtz (Age 17)

~ George and Bonnie Mickol ~ In loving memory of Scott Mickol (Age 16)

~ Bill Steadley and Family ~ In loving memory of Allison T. Steadley (Age 20)

~ Georgia Williams ~ In loving memory of Angel "AJ" Cuevas, Jr. (Age 25)

DAD

I've watched his eyes grow tired, Liquid full with pain
from having to put dreams aside.

I recall leathery hands, large and warm as they
covered mine. I now realize caring that hid behind a
stone face, and hopes that patiently waited as I
searched for my own space.

I still hurt from times I couldn't succeed, I beg for
more time to show him the respect he needs. I see
his eyes, they still hold their light and I
Want him to wish me a million more good nights.

Scott McFarlane

Newsletter Dedications



David George Benning (Age 46)

God gave me a list of things that he wished for
me to do,
And foremost on the list, was to watch and care
for you.

And when you lie in bed at night, the day's
chores put to flight, God and I are closest to
you...in the middle of the night.

When you think of my life on earth, and all
those loving years because you are human, they
are bound to bring you tears.

But do not be afraid to cry; it does relieve the
pain.

Remember there would be no flowers, unless
there was some rain.

I wish that I could tell you all that God has
planned.

But if I were to tell you, you wouldn't under-
stand.

But one thing is for certain, though my life on
earth is o'er.

I'm closer to you now, than I ever was before.

When you're walking down the street, and
you've got me on your mind;

I'm walking in your footsteps only half a step
behind



Angel "AJ" Cuevas, Jr. (Age 25)

*We miss you.
You are forever in our hearts*

Newsletter Dedications



Michael Benjamin Kurtz (Age 17)

**My son, my big brother, my friend ...
in 17 short years you lived, laughed,
played, grew, comforted, protected
and loved. You unconditionally loved
us. An unfinished life.
Forever loved - Forever missed.**

*Love,
Mom, Adie and Mark*



Scott Mickol (Age 16)

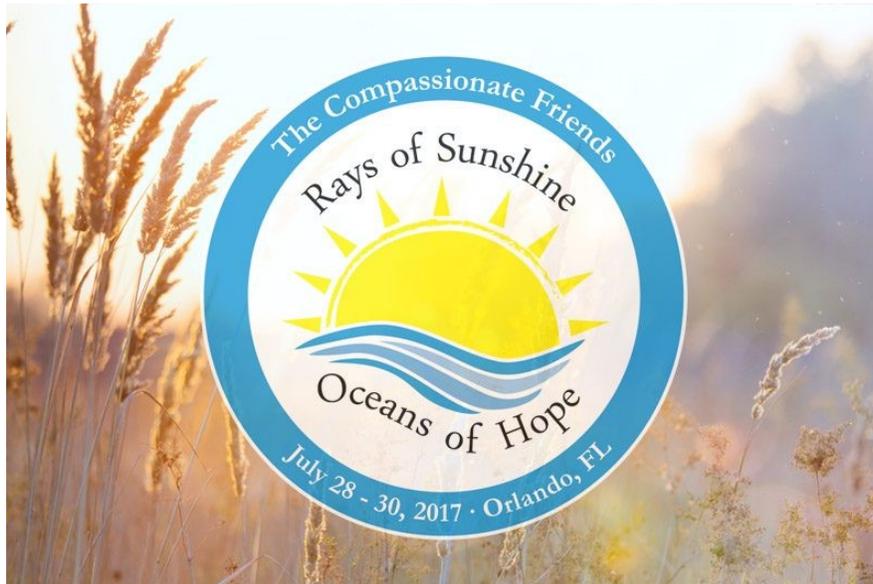
You are forever in our hearts

*Love,
Mom and Dad
Tracy and Jeff*

TCF National News

40th TCF National Conference

July 28 - July 30



The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Orlando, Florida, will be the site of the 40th TCF National Conference on July 28-30, 2017. “Rays of Sunshine, Oceans of Hope” is the theme of this year’s event, which promises more of last year’s great National Conference experience. The 2017 Conference will be held at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek. We’ll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#) and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

[« All Events](#)

[Online Registration](#)

[Print Registration Form](#)

Pre-registration will be available until July 7, 2017. Please note: while on-site conference registration will be available, the Friday lunch and Saturday dinner is only available with pre-registration.

[Workshops](#)

Hotel Reservations

[Click here](#) to make your hotel reservations online or by calling 888.353.2013 at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek.

Our Chapter News

Candlelight Remembrance Service

Please join us on Sunday, June 11th from 3-5 pm for our annual Candlelight Remembrance Service and balloon release. The service consists of lighting candles in memory of our children with appropriate readings, poems, music, a balloon release (with sunshine) and refreshments. The service will be held at Bethany Lutheran Church, 6041 Ridge Road, Parma.



Please bring a framed photo of your child, no larger than 8x10 to be displayed.

We will again be performing a slideshow of our children. If you have not provided a photo in the past and want your child included, please e-mail a photo to lit@roadrunner.com with your child's name, **no later than Wednesday, May 31st**. You can also mail a photo to Don Litvin, 16447 Southway Drive, Brook Park, OH 44142.

If you are planning on attending this special event, please sign up at the June 8th meeting or phone Pauline Dey at 440-526-2087 with your name and the number attending.

Refreshments will be served in the basement of the church after the balloon release. If you would like, please bring a dessert to share.



Sincere thanks to all who have helped plan this very special service in memory of our children, and to those who will help with set-up or clean-up needs on June 11th.

What Is A Love Gift ?

A love gift is a gift of money to The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in honor of a child who has died, but it can also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help in the work of our chapter. All local TCF chapters are totally dependent on funds from our families. We DO NOT receive funds from our National Office. Everything we need to operate our local chapter is paid directly from our local resources and our local family contributions. All monetary love gifts are tax deductible.

Thank you to all who contribute and support our chapter. Some people contribute in memory of other's children ... this is a wonderful way for others to say, "I am remembering your child." Other "Gifts of Love" are evident by all the compassionate and giving volunteers we have within our organization.

Love gifts should be made payable to The Compassionate Friends and mailed to our treasurer:

George Mickol, 2914 Dellwood Drive, Parma, OH 44134

What do we live for if not to make life less difficult for each other? ~ George Eliot

Father's Day

I just finished watching another miserable cologne commercial on TV. For some reason these are the first signs of the upcoming holiday, commercials that are only shown at Christmas and Father's Day to give wives and kids some idea of what to get Dad to celebrate a gift-oriented holiday.

Like the other fathers who read this newsletter, I know the gift I'd like to get this Father's Day, just as I know there is no way that it will happen. My son's life. An opportunity not to hurt when I see boys who are the age my son should be now. A chance to dream those dreams for that little boy again. But that's not going to happen. Instead I will get up on that day, having called and wished my father a happy day the night before, and go to the florist for the flowers I will place on my son's grave. I will stand alone and cry for a time, then return home to my wife and our infant son. This year will have a greater measure of peace due to young Dan's arrival, but I shall always have that Alex-sized hole in my soul, a longing that I know I will have until I too die.

Like many bereaved fathers I have felt the lack of understanding of the non-bereaved on how a father should mourn his child's death, and for how long. I do not understand how a society can have such belief in the strength of maternal love, and do such a good job of ignoring the intensity of paternal love. From the people whose only question at Alex's memorial service was on how my wife was dealing with this tragedy, to the long-time friend who didn't understand my choking up after watching a Hallmark Card commercial last year, the majority of people around us seem to have difficulty with the thought that a father may need to grieve for his deceased child just as much as a mother might.

So that is where some support and love is needed, and needed badly. Of course we have Compassionate Friends, but something more personal and closer to home is needed. In a recent newsletter there was a note from a bereaved mother from New Jersey asking fathers and siblings to be understanding of a grieving mother's needs on Mother's Day. I agree, but I would also hope that you ladies will not forget your husband's this Father's Day as well. It is frequently said that we males don't often talk of our emotional needs, and are reluctant to show our pain, but we need love and 'warm fuzzies' when we hurt also. Please remember us on June 18, and please remember also that those cute little sentimental commercials that hurt you in May, take their toll on us in June. There are definitely times when I can do without Old Spice, McDonalds, Hallmark, and AT&T.

Brothers, I wish you peace, comfort, and love.

*Doug Hughes
TCF Cincinnati, OH
In Memory of my son, Alex*

Danny

Danny, our only child, passed away at the age of twelve. His death was unexpected, and the pain almost unbearable. Our pastor told us that yellow is the color of life. What then could be more fitting than yellow roses? To ensure these symbols of life for years to come, I bought a rose bush for my wife. After all, she was still Danny's mom and needed more than ever to be reminded of that. I planted the bush on Mother's Day.

On the day before Father's Day, the roses bloomed - three of them, to be exact. They were arranged in size order, just as our family had been in life. When I bought the bush, there was no way to know that there were to be only three roses. I have no doubt this was a sign from Danny. He wanted us to know that he still lives, and that there are still three roses.

*John W. Carlsen
In memory of Danny
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5125 N. Union Blvd., Ste. 4
Colorado Springs, Colorado 89018*

When Fathers Weep at Graves

I see them weep
 the fathers at the stones

taking off the brave armor
 forced to wear in the work place

clearing away the debris
 with gentle fingers

inhaling the sorrow
 diminished by anguish

their hearts desiring
 what they cannot have--

to walk hand in hand
 with children no longer held--

to all the fathers who leave a part
 of their hearts at the stones

may breezes underneath trees of time
 ease their pain

as they receive healing tears
 ...the gift the children give.

*Alice J. Wisler
 For David, in memory of our son Daniel*

Newsletter Dedications

A newsletter dedication is a wonderful way to remember your child, and to help defray the costs to produce the newsletter. The cost is \$30 (tax deductible). If you would like to include a dedication, please fill out the form below and either bring it to a monthly meeting or mail it with your check (made payable to The Compassionate Friends) to Bill Luff, 133 Fourth Avenue, Berea, OH 44017. If you have a picture to include or a small tribute, please e-mail it to Bill Luff at:

jbl3665@sbcglobal.net



Donor: _____
 (Your Name)

Donor Address: _____
 (Street) (City, State, Zip) (Phone #)

In Memory of: _____
 (Child's Name)

I would like dedication to appear in newsletter for month of: _____
 (1st Choice) (2nd Choice)